VEN. A noble spirit.

[They all stand ceremoniously looking on

*e *Tim.* If our betters play at that game, we must not. " *Apem.* Dare to imitate them. Faults that are rich are fair/" This is said satirically, and in character. It was a sober reflection in Timon; who by *our betters* meant the gods, which require to be repaid for benefits received ; but it would be impiety in men to expect the same observance for the trifling good they clo. Apemantus, agreeably to his character, perverts this sentiment as if Timon had spoke of earthly grandeur and potentates, who expect largest returns for their favours; and therefore ironically replies as above. WARBURTON.

I cannot see that these lines are more proper in any other mouth than Timon's, to whose character of generosity and condescension they are very suitable. To suppose that by *our betters* are meant the gods, is very harsh, because to imitate the gods has been hitherto reckoned the highest pitch of human virtue. The whole is a trite and obvious thought, uttered by Timon with a kind of affected modesty. If I would make any alteration, it should be only to reform the numbers thus :

** Our betters play that game ; we
must not dare *s T" imitate them :
faults that are rich are fair."

JOHNSON".

The faults of rich persons, and which contribute to the increase of riches, wear a plausible appearance, and as the world goes are thought fair; but they are faults notwithstanding.

HEATH,

Dr. Warburton with his usual love of innovation, transfers the last word of the first of these lines, and the whole of the second, to Apemantus. Mr. Heath has justly observed that this cannot have been Shakspeare's intention, for thus Apemantus would be made to address Timon personally, who must therefore have seen and heard him; whereas it appears from a subsequent speech that Timon had not yet taken notice of him, as he salutes him with some surprize—

, " O, Apemantus !—you are welcome." The term—our betters, being used by the inferior classes of men when they speak of their superiors in the state. Shakspeare uses these words with his usual laxity to express persons of high rank and fortune. MALONE.

So, m King Lear, vol. s. p. 179, Edgar says (referring to the distracted king):

*e When we *our betters* see bearing our woes,
f We scarcely think our miseries our foes/

STEEVE.NS...